

REMARKS

Claims 4 – 9 were pending and claims 6 and 7 were allowed prior to issuance of the present Final Rejection. In the present Amendment, claim 9 has been amended to include all limitations of claim 4, now canceled, and claim 5 has been amended in view of the Examiner's objection to claim 5. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider and initial the references listed on the Form PTO-1449 that accompanied the IDS filed on October 16, 2006 and return a copy of the initialed Form PTO-1449 to the undersigned.

Claim 5 was objected to due to discrepancies noted by the Examiner. Claim 5 has been amended in view of the Examiner's suggestion to delete the phrase "the airbag cover includes a door portion covering the opening of the case." However, regarding the Examiner's suggestion as to the phrase "the airbag cover is covered," the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to, for example, the last paragraph on page 22 of the present application, which states that "the vertical dimension w1 of the upper door 58 of the airbag cover 46 is **so set as to close the gap D between the lower panel 19b as an interior decoration member and the general portion 47 of the airbag cover 46...** (emphasis added)." As the specification provides support for the above noted recitation in claim 5, and as this fact was confirmed by the undersigned during a telephone interview with the Examiner on October 30, 2006, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's objection be withdrawn.

Claims 4, 5 and 8 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of U.K. Patent Application No. 2,263,671 to Kitagawa *et al.* (hereafter

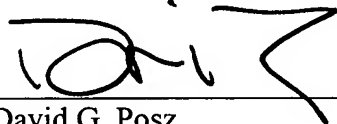
“Kitagawa”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,904,367 to Warnez *et al.* (hereafter “Warnez”). For the reasons discussed below, these claims, as amended, are now in condition for allowance.

Claim 4 has been canceled, and its limitations have been incorporated into claim 9, which the Examiner indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim (claim 4). Claim 5 has been amended to depend from allowable claim 9 and therefore is also in allowable form. Claim 8 was amended to depend from claim 6 in the previous Amendment filed on July 20, 2006. As claim 6 is allowed, claim 8 is also in allowable form based on its dependency from allowed claim 6.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

If there are any problems with the payment of fees, please charge any underpayments and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



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